

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 IO-12 MBFR-03 NIC-01 GAC-01 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 RSR-01 /109 W

----- 103146

R 201759 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3984

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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HELSINKI FOR MPT DLE; VIENNA FOR MBFR DEL

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: SPD DOWN PLAYS CHANCELLOR' S THREAT TO
RESIGN AS PARTY CHAIRMAN

REFERENCE: BONN 3954

1. WITHIN HOURS OF THE CHANCELLOR' S THREAT TO RESIGN AS
PARTY CHAIRMAN SHOULD THE SPD CONVENTION NEXT MONTH IN
HANNOVER ADOPT POSITIONS CONTRADICTORY TO THOSE ADOPTED
LAST OCTOBER IN DORTMUND, SEVERAL SPD SPOKESMEN HAVE
DENIED HE MADE THE THREAT.

2. ON MARCH 19 IN BERLIN, SPD VICE- CHAIRMAN WEHNER SAID,
" THERE IS NO RESIGNATION THREAT FROM WILLY BRANDT".
WEHNER WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE CHANCELLOR WAS MERELY
REFERRING WITH " REFRESHING DIRECTNESS" TO THE OVER-
WHELMING VICTORY OF THE PARTY IN THE NOVEMBER ELECTION
AND WAS WARNING THE PARTY ON THE EVE OF THE CONFERENCE
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NOT TO DISAVOW THE PLATFORM THAT HAD LED TO THAT VICTORY.

3. SPD LEFT WING SPOKESMAN JOACHIM STEFFEN HAS ALSO SAID THAT HE HAS HEARD NOTHING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT BRANDT MIGHT RESIGN AS PARTY CHAIRMAN AND HAS GONE ON TO SAY THAT HE " COULD NOT IMAGINE" THAT THE CONVENTION WOULD ADOPT RESOLUTIONS CONTRARY TO THOSE REPRESENTED BY THE PARTY IN THE ELECTION. REFERRING TO THE RECENT YONG SOCIALISTS' S RESOLUTION TO STOP OFFSET PAYMENTS FOR AMERICAN TROOPS STATIONED IN EUROPE, STEFFEN SAID SUCH A DECISION WAS " COMPLETELY UNTHINKABLE. THE CHANCELLOR HIMSELF HAS SAID NOTHING PUBLICLY ON HIS REMARKS OF THE WEEKEND.

4. THE FDP LEADERSHIP HAS NOT YET COMMENTED ON BRANDT' S THREAT, BUT THE SPEAKER OF THE FDP IN NORTHRHINE-WESTPHALIA " WELCOMED" THE CHANCELLOR' S WARNING TO HIS LEFT WING. FDP CHAIRMAN SCHEEL HAD EARLIER EXPRESSED HIS UNHAPPINESS WITH THE YOUNG SOCIALIST' S RESOLUTIONS. BARZEL, THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, HOWEVER, HAS CHOSEN TO IGNORE SPD DISAVOWALS OF BRANDT' S THREAT AND HAS PUBLICLY REFERRED TO THEM AS AN ATTEMPT ONCE MORE TO HIDE THE SERIOUS THREAT FROM THE LEFT THAT HAS LONG BEEN VISIBLE WITHIN THE SPD.
HILLENBRAND

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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